




**MOUNT HOUSE
SCHOOL**

INSPIRING EVERY INDIVIDUAL

SCHOOL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Review	Date	By
Current Review	September 2023	
Next Review	September 2024	

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (May 2023) 'School attendance'
- DfE (Sept 2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (Sept 2023) 'Keeping children safe in education (2023)'
- DfE (Sept 2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Requirements

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Regular attendance at Mount House is vitally important for a student's all-round development. It is important that staff, parents and students are familiar with the Attendance Policy and the procedures operating at school.
- Poor attendance undermines students' academic attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts students at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.
- Students who are absent for any reason are expected to complete missed work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete assignments.
- Should a student be excluded for any reason, the school will ensure that appropriate work is set for completion.
- All work missed by absence, for whatever reason, is due in on the day the student returns to school.
- Students showing patterns of non-attendance or with any unauthorised absence, where it is clear that the absences could be a sign of early truanting, will be subject to immediate consequences and parents will be called into the school.
- Consequences may range from a student being placed in detention to the student's parents being reported to the appropriate authorities.

Registration and Absence

- Registers are taken for both morning and afternoon sessions and Mount House School will telephone parents should there be unexplained absence of which the school has not been notified.
- In addition to the statutory required registrations, all lessons are registered using iSAMS.
- Parents who request leave of absence must write to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) requesting permission, using the appropriate form, which is found on the school website. Absences for such things as family holidays are not acceptable and parents should not expect these to be approved.
- Senior members of the pastoral leadership will monitor attendance and will always investigate the reasons for absence of any student with a significant record of absence, with less than 90% attendance causing significant concern and less than 85% causing serious concern.
- Student absences at the start of the school year present a skewed proportion, so their seriousness will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account previous attendance.

Safeguarding and attendance

The DSL ensures the following safeguarding-related procedures:

- Following up unexplained absences of any child with a telephone call from the school on the morning of the first day of absence.
- Notifying social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a student who is on the child safeguarding register.
- Notifying the local authority when a child moves to a new school at any point during their time at the school.
- Notifying the local authority when children are added to the school roll.
- Any Welfare Concern Forms completed by staff relating to absences.

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in Need
- Looked After Children
- Students with English as Additional Language
- Students with Special Educational Needs and Disability

Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory for all students. This means the usual rules on school attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) will apply, including:

- The parents' duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- The school's accountability for the education and safeguarding of the students on its roll. It has a responsibility to record attendance and follow up periods of absence in line with the procedures set out in the main body of this policy.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices guided by the LA's code of conduct.

Reluctance to return to school

The school will remind parents of their legal duty to ensure their child attends school, and parents will be advised to contact the school if they have concerns about their child returning to school.

If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the school.

Monitoring attendance

The attendance officer will monitor the school's attendance rates. Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to re-engage affected students with school attendance.

Students at risk of persistent absence

The school will ensure it provides support to students at risk of persistent absence, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary. In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing persistent absence, the SLT will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Having a **weekly** tutor review.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Creating attendance clinics.

Where a student becomes at risk of persistent absence, the school will:

- Welcome the student back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
- Meet with the student to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead **weekly** check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

Where a student at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the school's duty of care.

Children Missing (who are absent from) Education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal

exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. Being absent repeatedly may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going completely missing from education in future.

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation with the Head.

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (student file) has been requested by another school.

Please see the School's Supervision and Lost in Education Policy for full details, and the DfE Guidance [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance).

Further Information

Parents and students should carefully read and sign any documentation received from Mount House School relating to conduct and attendance, and are required to work closely with the school to support good attendance as a preparation for the world of work and lifelong learning.

Our website www.mounthouse.org is updated daily, and this policy and other relevant material is published there. The school calendar is published on a termly basis and dates when the school is open can be accessed from the home page.

School emergency closures for such things as extreme weather will also be published on the home page of our website, Twitter and via email.

For any contact regarding non-attendance, please telephone 0208 449 6889 or email reception@mounthouse.org. The school reception and form tutor must be notified in advance of any medical/dental appointments or other planned absence from school.